



St. Nicolas' CE Combined School Taplow

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Music Curriculum News Spring 2025

"This country has a proud history of musicmaking. Down the generations, music has enriched our national identity, our community and our economy. Music education is essential to safeguarding and extending the musical life of our country for generations to come. Excellent music education opens opportunities, but it is not simply a means to an end: it is also an end in itself. It gives children and young people an opportunity to express themselves, to explore their creativity, to work hard at something, persevere and shine. These experiences and achievements stay with them and shape their lives."

These are the opening words of the National Plan for Music Education published in June 2022 and I think they aptly reflect how important music is in St Nicolas' School. As the specialist music teacher, I teach music to all classes each week and I aim to not only teach the necessary curriculum but also link music to the topics that the children are learning about in other subjects. Our aim is to learn through music as well as learn about music and we want to give every child the opportunity to develop their own unique musical potential.

What will we be learning this term?

Reception: Chestnut class will continue to make music to complement their topic work, which will include animals, Chinese new year and music from other countries. They will be focusing on moving in time to the music, playing simple percussion instruments and singing tunefully.

Year 1: Elm class will be learning about musical opposites e.g. high/low (pitch), loud/quiet (dynamics), long/short (duration and rhythm) and will begin to learn about graphic scores. They will be using and naming percussion instruments to make music about toys for their history project as well as learning some traditional songs from around the United Kingdom to go with their geography project later in the term.

Year 2: Ash class will be thinking about musical structure i.e. how music is built up and they will be singing lots of songs about food and healthy eating. They will develop their knowledge of graphic scores and will develop their skills in playing tuned percussion i.e. chime bars, glockenspiels and xylophones as well as writing basic rhythms using traditional notation.

Year 3: Oak class will be studying the 'Carnival of the Animals' as the basis for their work on composition. They will be creating their own animal music and experimenting with different sounds, tempo, dynamics and pitch.

Year 4: Pine class will be learning about Roman instruments to complement their history work and will be comparing Roman instruments to those in a modern orchestra. If any parents are able to play any orchestral instruments or have access to any then please make contact with me.

Year 5: Willow class will be studying 'The Snowman' film and making their own film soundtrack music before going on to look at Tudor music alongside their history project and will study a simple time line of music from Tudor music to Victorian, gaining an insight into how music has changed through the ages. A group of 5 or 6 children will continue to learn the trumpet each half term.

Year 6: Fir class will be looking at different music genres including jazz, blues, calypso, rock'n'roll and reggae. They will have the chance to perform and compose in each genre and find out how they are all linked as well as how history and events helped to shape the music of the day, and indeed still does.

Music in Assembly

We always listen to music in assembly each day and this term we are continuing with a different genre of music every week. The children really engage with this and we hope they will continue to respond in a positive way with the different sorts of music that they hear and be able to articulate their own thoughts and opinions.

Instrumental lessons

We offer a wide variety of instrumental lessons across all year groups. If you are interested in your child learning an instrument, please do not hesitate to get in touch to discuss the options available. All our peripatetic teachers from South Bucks music have availability for brass (trumpet or trombone), woodwind (flute, clarinet saxophone) or strings (violin or cello)

Choir and ukulele clubs

Ks1 have a ukulele club and choir both of which are free of charge (keep your eyes open for days of clubs). There will be KS2 choir for years 5 and 6 only for the first half term but there will be a full KS2 choir again in time for the Easter service. The children will be informed as to when these choirs will take place and will have the opportunity to join at the first practice.

Mrs Dobson Music teacher